Indians in Jails in Gulf Countries

268. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians languishing in the jails in Gulf countries, country-wise;

(b) whether Government secured the release of any of these persons during 1991-92 and 1992-93;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for the early release of remaining persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) to (d) The inforamtion is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Indians visited Israel

269. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the number of Indians visited Israel and vice-versa since restoration of diplomatic relations with Israel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): About 12,900 Israelis visited India since the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. Information regarding number of Indians who visited Israel is not available since details of country-wise foreign visits by Indians are not maintained by Government.

Repatriation of Chakma Refugees

270. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:

DR. SANJAYA SINH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bangladesh Government has given any assurance to the Government of India to take back 56,000 Chakma refugees and for making necessary arrangements for their return in the near future; and

(b) If so, whether the issue has been resolved; the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government of Bangladesh is committed to take back all tribal Bangladeshi refugees from Chittagong Hill Tracts based upon available records of both sides and information furnished by the concerned village headmen.

It has assured that all measures would be undertaken to ensure safety and security of the refugees during and after their return to Bangladesh.

(b) No, Sir. The issue has not been resolved. The repatriation of Chakma and other tribal refugees did not commence as scheduled on June 9, 1993 since the refugees remain largly unconvinced of the suitability of conditions that await their return.

Repatriation of Bangladeshi Refugees

271. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Bangladesh have arrived at a decision for the repatriation of Bangladeshi refugees and that about 2500 refugees were to be repatriated per day from India;

(b) if so, whether the agreement between the two countries is being fulfilled, if so, the number of Bangladeshi refugees that have since returned to their home; and

(c) if answer to part (b) be in the negative, what are the difficulties in implementing the agrrieved at between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Following